



TV Schedule Find Artists A B C D E F G H I J K L M N O P Q R S T U V W X Y Z #

<a href="#">Home</a>	<a href="#">Music</a>	<a href="#">Shows</a>	<a href="#">News</a>	<a href="#">Movies, Games &amp; More</a>	<input type="text" value="Search all MTV.com"/>	<a href="#">Go</a>
----------------------	-----------------------	-----------------------	----------------------	--	---	--------------------

Mar 3 2006 10:45 AM EST

## Twenty Students Suspended In Latest Round Of MySpace-Related Busts

### Drug and gun charges and two sexual-misconduct arrests also put the site in the spotlight this week.

By Gil Kaufman

As MySpace has exploded in popularity over the past two years and become the top social networking site on the Internet for teens and twentysomethings, it has continued to draw attention from school administrators, police and politicians concerned over how some are using the site.

On Thursday, a student at TeWinkle Middle School in Costa Mesa, California, was told he faces expulsion for allegedly posting graphic, anti-Semitic threats against a classmate on his MySpace site, according to the *The Los Angeles Times*.

School officials said 20 of his classmates were also suspended for viewing the posting, and police are investigating the boy's comments as a possible hate crime. Parents of three of the suspended students said the invitation to join the boy's MySpace social group, which was named "I hate [girl's name]" followed by an anti-Semitic slur and an expletive, gave no indication of the alleged threat.

"With what the students can get into using the technology, we are all concerned about it," said Bob Metz, the district assistant superintendent of secondary education, according to the *Times*. Metz defended the mid-February suspensions saying that the incident involved student safety, despite concerns from some parents over whether the school overstepped its bounds by disciplining students for actions that occurred on personal computers, at home and after school hours.

But private schools across the country have been quick to warn students that posting about school activities, fellow students or administrators on sites like MySpace, even in their private time at home, could lead to suspension or expulsion (see "[Catholic School Principal To Students: Thou Shalt Not Blog](#)").

Since its launch three years ago, MySpace has gathered more than 57 million registered users (including fakes and duplicates) to become the largest online community of teens and twentysomethings in history, according to a recent *Wired News* report. As of November, it had a 752-percent growth in Web traffic over one year.

But, in addition to the California case, a number of recent incidents have put the site in the spotlight for unsavory reasons. On Thursday, officials announced the arrest of two men in Boston on allegations that they had illegal sexual contact with minors they met through MySpace, according to a *Reuters* report. Officials said 22-year-old New Yorker Sonny Szeto used the site to meet an 11-year-old girl while Stephen Letavec, 39, of Pennsylvania, used it to meet a 14-year-old girl.

And in Bensalem, Pennsylvania, a 16-year-old boy has been charged with possession of a controlled substance, possession of drug paraphernalia and possession of a prohibited weapon, found when police raided his home after spotting his MySpace profile, in which he posted photos of himself posing with guns and marijuana. The unidentified teen, who posted as "Snow White Residue," boasted on the site that he'd made \$250,000 dealing drugs and weapons. Cops found a semi-automatic gun and a pair of brass knuckles in the raid.

The bust came amid other reports from across the country, including a criminal probe by Connecticut Attorney General Richard Blumenthal last month into MySpace's practices, after reports that as many as seven underage girls in one region of the state were fondled or had consensual sex with adult men they'd met through the site, and who had lied about their age, according to *Wired*.

Views 1,174

[Send to Friend](#)  
[Print](#)



Photo: MySpace.com

#### TOP STORIES

[Kanye West, Radiohead, Rage Against the Machine, Nine Inch Nails, Wilco Top Lollapalooza 2008 Lineup](#)

[Diddy Talks About L.A. Times' Tupac Story: 'It Just Really Hurt'](#)

['American Idol' Castoff Ramiele Malubay On David Cook's Hospitalization: 'We All Break Down In Totally Different Ways'](#)

[Kanye West Reveals Glow In The Dark Tour Stage Set, In The Newsroom Blog](#)

['Leatherheads': Semipro Life, By Kurt Loder](#)

[Madonna's '4 Minutes' Video Gets Online Sneak Peek](#)

[Shia LaBeouf, Michelle Monaghan Spread Paranoia, Technophobia In 'Eagle Eye'](#)

[N.E.R.D. Video Shoot -- Featuring Lindsay Lohan -- Erupts Into Brawl, Eyewitnesses Say](#)

['The Flight Of The Red Balloon': Pffff, By Kurt Loder](#)

[Max Cavalera Says He 'Would Like To See' A Sepultura Reunion; Plus Ozzfest, Judas Priest & More News That Rules, In Metal File](#)

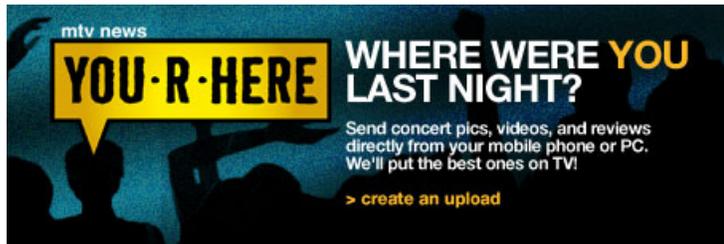
Get Music, Movies and Game news on your chumby!

What's a chumby?

In November, a 16-year-old girl at Paramus High School in New Jersey had her suspension extended by three days for posting mean comments about another student on her MySpace page, according to *Wired*, which also reported that seven students in Lincoln, Nebraska, were suspended from their high school basketball team in December after a MySpace message mentioned they'd been drinking alcohol. And, earlier this year, administrators at Powell High School in Tennessee suspended two sophomores and a junior for almost a month for posting off-color messages under a teacher's name.

MySpace CEO Chris DeWolfe told *Reuters* that the site has appropriate safety measures in place, including a prohibition on children under 14 from using the site and a restriction on access to the profiles of 14- and 15-year-olds, allowing them to be contacted only by users that they add to their friend lists. Even with those safety measures, there is no foolproof way for MySpace to verify the actual age of all its users.

While the most often-stated reason given by school administrators for cracking down on the use of sites like MySpace is their concern that predators might use the personal information on the sites to abduct or attack children, *Wired* reported that actual cases of this happening are hard to find and the number of incidents publicly linked to the site are "dwarfed by the overall number of such cases historically prosecuted" in the U.S.



mtv news  
**YOU-R-HERE** **WHERE WERE YOU LAST NIGHT?**  
Send concert pics, videos, and reviews directly from your mobile phone or PC. We'll put the best ones on TV!  
> create an upload

### [How I Lost 55 Pounds](#)

Amazing Chinese Weight Loss Secret. Seen On CNN, NBC, CBS & Fox News.  
[www.Wu-YiSource.com](http://www.Wu-YiSource.com)

### [2007 "Editor's Choice" Winner](#)

Small Speakers And Big Sound From Orb Audio.  
[www.orbaudio.com](http://www.orbaudio.com)

### [Sharp AQUOS® LCD HDTV: Official Site](#)

There's more to see - Full HD 1080p resolution & true flat widescreen.  
[www.AQUOS.com](http://www.AQUOS.com)

SPONSORED LINKS

[Send Us Feedback](#) | [MTV Contests & Sweepstakes](#) | [MTV Shop](#) | [Rhapsody.com](#) | [MTV2](#) | [mtvU](#) | [MTV Tr3s](#)  
[MTV Radio](#) | [MTV Style](#) | [MTV Jobs](#) | [Podcasts](#) | [RSS](#) | [Message Boards](#) | [Newsletters](#) | [Site Map](#)  
[Terms of Use](#) | [Privacy Policy/Your CA Privacy Rights](#) | [Copyright Compliance Policy](#) | [User Content Submission Agreement](#) | [Advertising Opportunities](#)  
[Community FAQ](#) | [Social Project Privacy Policy](#) | [Social Project Terms of Use](#)

© 2008 MTV Networks. © and TM MTV Networks. ALL RIGHTS RESERVED. E-commerce on this website is brought to you by MTVN Direct Inc.